



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

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TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Richard J. Bruckner
Director

SUBJECT: LAND ENTITLEMENT PROCESS REVIEW – STATUS UPDATE

Background

On May 25, 2010, the Board of Supervisors directed Regional Planning to prepare a comprehensive review of case processing, including:

- Identifying specific time-frames for case processing, with performance metrics for processing land-use approvals
- Determining measures to streamline the process for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, particularly measures that will expedite Environmental Impact Reports
- Document how the Department complies with the Permit Streamlining Act
- Discussion of possible means of expanding the Special Projects section to process more of the larger projects
- Providing a better means of accounting for those projects which are based on a "deposit" system
- Reaching out to building industry representatives, consultants who regularly process applications and members of the public to solicit feedback concerning both the proposed processing improvements and the fee increases

The Board asked the Department to report back within a six-month timeframe. This is the second status update; additional updates will be provided up to a projected final report to be submitted by early December.

Stakeholder Committee—Second Meeting

The Stakeholder Committee consists of representatives from the building industry, BIA, consultants, Urban Land Institute, LAEDC and the environmental community. The second meeting of the Committee was held on July 15, 2010. The primary focus of this meeting was to discuss comments from the Stakeholders regarding the Land

Entitlement Process in Los Angeles County, identify opportunities for improvement and implementation of best practices. Staff from Regional Planning, Public Works, Fire, Parks & Recreation and Public Health attended and actively participated in this meeting. The comments received from the Stakeholders and department staff was far-reaching, but some common themes emerged:

- There is a significant interest in the concept of co-location of County departments involved in the land entitlement process
- The idea of a more conceptual tentative map process could be beneficial to the development community, the environmental community and other stakeholders
- There are opportunities for technology enhancements such as electronic plan submittal, plan checking and approval
- There is an interest in "cradle-to-grave" entitlement processing wherein the same planner serves as the single point of contact for a project from beginning to end
- There is a need for better project accounting and sharing of financial information for projects following the "draw-down" account model

Next Steps

The next phase of the project includes interviews of County technical staff involved in the land permitting, land division and public hearing processes. Results from these interviews will be considered along with the Stakeholders' comments to develop alternative processes for further investigation.

The next Stakeholder Committee meeting is scheduled for September 9, 2010. This meeting will be used to begin introducing the proposed future processes; significant time will be spent elaborating each process, weighing pros and cons and building consensus. Ultimately, it is expected that a version of these future processes will serve as the basis for the Department's recommendations to your Board in December.

Fee Accounting Process

The Department has made progress, with the assistance of the Auditor-Controller and CEO, on identifying potential improvements in the accounting of fee and deposit funds through the use of E-CAPS. A meeting was held during the first week of August at which several improvements were discussed. The Department will be providing the Auditor-Controller with its business requirements for enhanced E-CAPS data collection and reporting. The Auditor-Controller will evaluate the business requirements and develop recommendations for possible improvement.

We will provide another update on the status of this project in September. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if you require additional information.

RJB:DLS

Attachment

c: Chief Executive Officer